

REMARKS

The office action of January 19, 2011, has been carefully considered.

It is noted that claims 24 and 40 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph.

Claims 24-27, 29, 34-36 and 41 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over EP 0999324 to Marcarini in view of the patent to Van den Boom et al. and the patent application of Nahata.

Claim 28 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Marcarini, Van den Boom et al. and Nahata, and further in view of the patent to Magnussen et al.

Claim 39 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Marcarini, Van den Boom et al. and Nahata, and further in view of EP 1111171 to Eychenne.

Claims 30-33, 37, 38 and 40 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Marcarini, Van den Boom et al. and Nahata, and further in view of the patent to Sanders.

In view of the Examiner's rejections of the claims, applicant has amended claims 24-26, 29-32, 37, 40 and 41. Support for the changes to claim 24 can be found in the specification

It is respectfully submitted that the claims now on file particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Applicant has amended the claims to address the instances of indefiniteness pointed out by the Examiner.

In view of these considerations it is respectfully submitted that the rejection of claims 24 and 40 under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph is overcome and should be withdrawn.

It is respectfully submitted that the claims presently on file differ essentially and in an unobvious, highly advantageous manner from the constructions disclosed in the references.

Turning now to the references, applicant wishes to point out that the patent to Van den Boom et al. corresponds to DE 196 17 038 discussed in the specification of the present application. This reference describes an electrical plug connection that has an

electrical coupling part assigned to the plug connection and includes an electrical counter-coupling part that is arranged on the cable extending from the carrier. The coupling and decoupling of this known electrical plug connection makes the mounting and dismounting of the grip laborious. Such an electrical plug connection is not illustrated in Fig. 3 of Van den Boom et al., but is discussed at column 4, lines 28-32. The cable plug connection extends in the hinge area of the grip 13.

Marcarini has a similar electrical connection in the in the hinge are 16 of the grip 1; however, instead of a plug connection there is slide connection 20 between the end section 21 of the conductor 19 and the portion 14 of the wire antenna 12. Such a slide connection, in comparison to the plug connection of Van den Boom et al., induces an unreliable electrical contact.

The present invention pursues a completely different approach, which is best understood form Fig. 1. In the present invention electrical energy is to be provided to the outer electrode 37 in the grip 20. The energy comes from the cable 41 to the bracket 10. In contrast to the entire prior art, the present invention does not use the bearing end 21 of the grip 20 for the energy transfer, but instead uses the opposing working end 22,

which is movable relative to the bracket 10 in the direction of the arrow 24. Due to this movement 24, which is shown in dashed lines in Fig. 1, the gap 39 between the working end 22 of the grip 20 and the housing unit 30 of the bracket 10 is enlarged. This gap 39 is a variable separation between the bracket 10 and the grip 20 due to movement 24. The invention now suggests turning the gap 39 into an inner capacitor so that the inner electrical coupling field 50.1 is present there. This coupling field can then serve to transfer energy between the cable 41 with the electronic circuit 28, 38 connected thereto and the outer electrode 37.

Thus is recited in the last two paragraphs of amended claim 24. Furthermore, claim 24 has been amended to better define the gap and the location of the first inner electrode 35, which is fixed like the bracket 10, and the second inner electrode 36 which is movable with the grip 20 in the direction indicate by arrow 24. Such a construction is not taught by the references.

The same applies for the other embodiments of the invention as shown for example in Fig. 2. There the first inner electrode 45 is fixed relative to the bracket 10, while the second inner electrode 46 is on the adjacent cover part 25 and moves with the cover part. IN this embodiment asa well the gap between the two

inner electrodes 45, 46 is used as a variable spacing between the bracket 10 and the cover part 25.

Turning once more to the references, in Marcarini the antenna 12 acts as an outer electrode that is contacted electrically by the pin 16 at the pivot end of the grip 1. There is no energy provision at the opposite free end of the grip 1, as in the presently claimed invention.

As previously discussed, Van den Boom et al. teach an electrical contact. There is also only one electrode 30 even when it is separated and symmetrically arranged in the inner shell 28 of the grip 27 and has an L-shape as seen in Fig. 4. These two L-pieces are only connected to each other by a compensation electrode 33. These components 30, 33 form a single outer electrode in the sense of the present invention because they generate an electrical field 32 in the outer region of the door opposite the cladding 31 of the door 12 of the vehicle 10, as shown in Fig. 4. There is no teaching by Van den Boom et al. of an electrical coupling field in a gap between the handle 13 and a bracket in the door 12.

In Fig. 3, Nahata shows an electrical field 34 on the outer

side of the door, even when a sense element 22 with a shield layer 30 serves for this purpose. The shield layer 30 only shields the metal surface 26 of the door relative to the sense element 22. This is described in paragraphs [0022]-[0023] of Nahata. In Fig. 3 this is also shown as an electrical schematic to the right of the hand. There is only an outer electrode in the sense of the present invention, which, due to the insulation by the shield layer 30 with the door metal 26, generates the field 34 on the outer side of the door. Nahata does not teach an inner electrical coupling field in the sense of the present invention. Nahata does not teach a grip whose movable working end has a variable gap relative to the bracket on the interior of the door. Thus, Nahata does not have inner electrodes on both sides of such a gap which could generate a coupling field, as in the presently claimed invention.

Thus, since none of the references teaches a construction having inner electrodes that generate a coupling field, their combination cannot provide such a teaching.

In view of these considerations it is respectfully submitted that the rejection of claims 24-27, 29, 34-36 and 41 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over a combination of the above-discussed references

is overcome and should be withdrawn.

The remaining references which were cited in various combinations with Marcarini, Van den Boom et al. and Nahata have also been considered. Applicant submits that none of these references adds anything to the teachings of Marcarini, Van den Boom et al. and Nahata so as to suggest the present invention as discussed above in connection with the independent claim.

In view of these considerations it is respectfully submitted that the rejections of claims 28, 30-33 and 37-40 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are overcome and should be withdrawn.

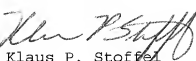
Reconsideration and allowance of the present application are respectfully requested.

Any additional fees or charges required at this time in connection with this application may be charged to Patent and Trademark Office Deposit Account No. 02-2275.

Respectfully submitted,

LUCAS & MERCANTI LLP

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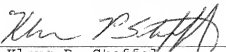

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